

“As co-chair of the Congressional Victims’ Rights Caucus, I’m honored to announce the deserving winners of this year’s awards,” said Costa. “The recipients are unsung heroes for those who have suffered from a serious crime. The acts of these few individuals serve as an example to our nation and inspire us all to do more to ensure the legal rights of victims of crime.”

“I am proud to honor the service of these courageous individuals who have devoted their lives to the cause of victims’ rights,” said Poe. “Their work has made our nation safer and given a voice to thousands of victims across the country. They deserve our gratitude and thanks.”

In honor of Victims’ Rights Week, Costa took to the floor of the House to speak in support of victims’ rights and the individuals who dedicate their time to serving those in need. For video of Costa’s floor speech, [click here](#).

Costa and Poe are co-founders and co-chairmen of the bipartisan Congressional Victims’ Rights Caucus, formed in 2005. The mission of the Congressional Victims’ Rights Caucus is to elevate crime victim issues in Congress in a bipartisan manner without infringing on the rights of the accused, and to represent and to advocate before the Administration and within Congress on behalf of crime victims.

The 2009 Victims’ Rights Caucus Recipients

(1) Lois Haight Award of Excellence and Innovation – Suzanne Brown-McBride has dedicated her life and work to victim assistance, public safety, and crime prevention. Suzanne began her work on behalf of sexual assault victims in 1991 as a community education specialist and crisis line advocate. Since that time, she’s demonstrated success as an administrator through her leadership of sexual assault and domestic violence service programs in California, Washington State and Oregon. Before recently beginning her tenure as Deputy Director of the Council of State Governments Justice Center, Suzanne served as the Executive Director of two statewide victim assistance associations: the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault; and the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. Suzanne Brown-McBride was nominated by Representative Jim Costa (CA-20).

(2) Suzanne McDaniel Public Awareness Award – Jay and Linda Foley are founders of the Identity Theft Resource Center (ITRC) in San Diego, California. When the ITRC began, “identity theft” was a crime where victims had no legal standing. It is now recognized through countless federal and state laws, and ITRC has made its name in developing victim assistance strategies that have made a profound difference in the lives of folks who fall prey to identity theft. The ITRC works actively to raise awareness of identity theft through mailings, partnerships with local businesses, and social networking. They additionally provide no-cost assistance to victims of identity theft, which has helped many people avoid financial ruin. Jay and Linda Foley and the Identity Theft Resource Center were nominated by Representative Susan Davis (CA-53) and Representative Brian Bilbray (CA-50).

(3) Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy – Herman Milholland currently serves as the Director/Chief of the Crime Victim Services Division in the Office of the

Texas Attorney General. He has dedicated his life to serving victims at the local, state and national levels. Herman has built state and local programs from the ground up that provide crime victims with compensation and restitution. He has ensured that victims in court proceedings are treated with respect and afforded their rights under the law. Importantly, Herman has also provided national leadership that focuses on a strong and positive future for crime victim assistance in America. Whether his efforts are focused on an individual victim in need of help or a national initiative to ensure the future of the victim assistance field, he is dedicated and committed to advocating for victims, their rights and needs and the services they deserve. Herman Milholland was nominated by Representative Ted Poe (TX-2).

(4) Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy – David Voth has served as the Director of Crime Victim Services in Lima, Ohio, since 1985. He is recognized as an outstanding advocate for victims of crime, and also for his unique expertise in the justice technology that enhances victim services. David is a founding member of the Board of the National Victims' Constitutional Amendment Network, which seeks to promote victims' rights across the nation. In 2009, he published, *Quality Victim Advocacy: A Field Guide*, which aims to simplify program planning and evaluation for victim assistance groups. The book has become a "must read" for victim advocates everywhere. David Voth was nominated by Representative Jim Jordan (OH-4)

(5) Allied Profession Award – Christine Keels has dedicated her life to community corrections in both Maryland and the District of Columbia. Christine designed the Victim Services Program for the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency in Washington, D.C. Through her leadership, Christine ensured that corrections officers were trained in victim issues. She also developed a District and cross border advocacy program to connect service providers with victims of crime, and to begin a dialogue between services providers to share information, resources and techniques. These efforts led to the development of a Victim Services Program Resource Manual, which was reviewed by the Department of Justice's Office of Victims of Crime and utilized in the development of a national registry of service providers. Christine was nominated by Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC).

(6) Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award – Susan Russell is a personal hero to many in the victim advocacy world. In 1992, she was kidnapped, raped and left for dead in a remote wilderness area. Her recovery began her path as an advocate and activist for other survivors of crime. She has been a prominent "voice for victims" at the local, state and national levels, testifying before Congress about the Victims of Crime Act and before the Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee to influence the outcome of victim related legislation in that state. Susan Russell was nominated by Representative Peter Welch (VT-At Large)